



GOVERNOR PETE WILSON

June 28, 1998

The Honorable Newt Gingrich
Speaker of the House
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Mr. Speaker:

As you know, fresh water is the lifeblood of western economies and ecosystems. In California, we need more reliable supplies of water so our citizens can withstand the next drought without experiencing economic or physical hardship, provide extra storage for environmental benefits, and fulfill our responsibilities to the other states of the Colorado River Basin.

Two years ago you were instrumental in securing federal authorization and subsequent appropriations so the federal government could be a partner with the State of California, numerous local governments, and thousands of individual stakeholders in launching the grand effort to restore the ecosystem of California's San Francisco Bay-Delta. You helped stimulate farmers, environmentalists, and city dwellers to work cooperatively in unprecedented ways to build a common future and avoid fruitless litigation.

Much progress has occurred in the intervening two years. The initial federal authorization focused on the environmental improvements that were common to the alternatives under consideration in the broad planning effort designed to provide safe and reliable water supplies and healthy ecosystems that are the goal of the CalFed process. California's voters approved a \$1 billion bond issue, in part to provide a state cost-share, and I have urged the legislature to appropriate additional funds for CalFed. We now have a sense of some of the initial projects that will be necessary to address the water supply and reliability elements of the planning effort. The vision of CalFed is that all water stakeholders are to benefit concurrently and proportionately from their mutual efforts. It is now therefore appropriate for Congress to take the next step and authorize and appropriate funds to improve the reliability of California's water supply.

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In addition to the current opportunities for the eco-system restoration as part of the CalFed process, I ask that you embrace and champion the efforts of the California Congressional delegation to authorize a total of \$147 million over the next two years, and appropriate \$67 million in the upcoming supplemental appropriations bill, as the federal share of the cost of planning, feasibility studies, environmental studies, permitting, and land acquisition for a down payment on the water supply reliability and water quality portion of the CalFed effort. There are many excellent projects that can be pursued, that will be needed regardless of the final decision on the CalFed alternatives, such as a modest increase in the height of Shasta Dam in northern California, and creating a water bank at the Madera Ranch near Fresno, that pose few environmental complications, indeed offer significant environmental and water quality advantages, and very importantly will simultaneously produce greater reliability of water supplies. You understand that only in a healthy economic system will society be able to make continued environmental progress. The work we are asking Congress to join with us in undertaking will go a long way to ensuring that healthy economic and environmental climate in the nation's largest state.

If you will join Californians in this joint endeavor, I stand ready to assist you in any way.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Pete Wilson". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Pete" and last name "Wilson" clearly distinguishable.